

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 000327

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS/IP/WHA, DS/IP/ITA, DS/CR/CIL AND DS/DSS/OSAC;
PANAMA FOR LEGATT, ICE ATTACHE, AND RSO; MANAGUA FOR RSO;
SALVADOR FOR RSO AND OIG TEAM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KCRM](#)

SUBJECT: CRIME STATISTICS FOR COSTA RICA: 2005

REF: A. COSTA RICAN JUDICIAL POLICE CRIME STATISTICS 2005

[B](#). DEA SEIZURE STATISTICS (2000 - 2005)

[C](#). EMBASSY SAN JOSE INFORMAL CONSULAR CRIME
STATISTICS (2004 - PRESENT)

[1](#). Per referenced crime statistics provided by the Judicial
Police (OIJ), RSO is providing a comparison for major crime
categories to the 2004 crime statistics for Costa Rica:

2005	Change from 2004
Theft of Vehicles	5403 cases 18.2%
Assaults (Robbery)	7500 cases 4.2%
Home Robberies	6151 cases 28.9%
Vehicle Break-ins	6916 cases 22.5%
Business Break-ins	4052 cases 22.0%
Kidnappings	8 cases 9 cases total
Bank Assaults	9 cases 11 cases total
Homicides	300 cases 9%(275 homicides)

[2](#). For every category of crime, the majority of the criminal
activity was in the San Jose region, identified as having a
population of 1,480,140 citizens. This increase in crime in
nearly every category except Bank Assaults and Kidnappings is
noteworthy and fits with anecdotal reports of criminal
incidents reported to RSO this past year. RSO has reported
in previous cables significant violent criminal activity in
San Jose, especially in the areas where the Embassy is
located and in the neighborhoods where the majority of our
personnel are housed.

[3](#). In FY 2005, the Consular Section processed 1,558
applications to replace U.S. passports stolen in Costa Rica.
This was an increase of 30% from the previous year, and puts
San Jose in first place worldwide, ahead of places like Rome
and Paris, for stolen passports. In almost all instances,
the passport theft involves tourists and is incidental to the
theft of luggage, purses, backpacks, briefcases, etc. Many
AmCits reporting passport theft do not file a report with the
OIJ due to the inconvenience, the language barrier, and the
realization that little or no action will be taken by OIJ to
solve the crime. Anecdotally, we also know that most AmCit
victims of crime do not report the incident to the Embassy
unless a passport was stolen or immediate assistance is
required.

[4](#) An increase in the murder rate between the 2004 and 2005
years (9 percent) does not look good for the homicide rate in
Costa Rica, looking forward five years. It is also important
to note the increase in narcotics seizures (Ref B), with
9691.13 kilos of cocaine and 35.36 kilos of heroin seized in
Costa Rica in CY 2005. Before CY 2005, the highest kilo
seizure amount of cocaine in Costa Rica during the last five
years was 5,710 kilos in CY 2003.

[5](#). RSO will continue to report specific criminal events
affecting Embassy personnel and AmCit tourists, in order to
present a clear picture of the crime threat in this country.
Although a tourist haven for both AmCits and Europeans, Costa
Rica has real crime problems, supported by the OIJ crime
statistics. The bottom line is crime is high in Costa Rica
and it appears to be getting worse.

LANGDALE